ARE YOU SAYING OR PRAYING?

PURPOSE
To illustrate that:
1. True prayer comes from the heart
2. Prayers are less effective if they are repetitious and not sincere
3. Sincere prayer takes a little more time and effort

MATERIALS
- Letter in an envelope
- Postage stamp
- Scriptures

LESSON
1. Ask, “Are there any prayers that Heavenly Father doesn’t really listen to?”
   a. Read Moroni 7:9. Ask, “According to this verse, why are some prayers not received by Heavenly Father?”

2. Read Matthew 6:7 and look for things Jesus encouraged us not to use in our prayers.
   a. Ask (or explain) what ‘vain repetitions’ are (things that are repeatedly said but without being sincere).

3. Object lesson: Have a letter placed in an envelope. Have an address written on the outside, but no postage stamp on the envelope. Ask why the mail carrier won’t deliver this letter. (no stamp)
   a. Read Alma 33:11. “Why was the prayer of Zenos heard?”
   b. Compare the postage stamp to sincerity. Sincerity is the ‘postage’ that delivers our letter to Heavenly Father!

4. Share the following quote from President Ezra Taft Benson:
   a. “When you pray---when you talk to your Heavenly Father---do you really talk out your problems with Him? Do you let Him know your feelings, your doubts, your insecurities, your joys, your deepest desires---or is prayer merely a habitual expression with the same words and phrases? Do you ponder what you really mean to say?” (Ensign, Nov. 1977, 32).

5. Explain that sincere prayers often take a little more time and effort, but are rewarded by the peace of knowing that the prayers are being heard.
a. Challenge them never say anything in their prayers that they really don't feel.
Testify that Heavenly Father really does hear the prayers that come from our hearts.